

That means it will not run up the debt. We are obligated to do that because that is in the budget resolution we passed earlier this year. That is what it says. We cannot do health care if it costs an extra penny. So we will do that. Finally, we will remain focused on seeing this fight all the way through because we are long overdue for a change.

Those who are fortunate enough to have health care now and who hear us debate how to make it better might wonder: What are you talking about? You may wonder what is in it for you—the people who are listening in. Well, health care reform helps everyone and affects everyone. It will help those who have insurance today but do not know if it will be there tomorrow. It will help those who worry about being just one illness away or one accident or one pink slip away from losing the insurance they have. It will help those who are covered but fear their children very likely will not be able to say that when they grow up—that they have coverage. And it will help nearly 50 million people who have none to begin with.

The reform we are pursuing means making sure that if you lose your job, your health care will not go with it. It means that if you change jobs, you will not have to worry about losing your coverage. Health care reform means lowering the costs of care and keeping them low. It means improving the quality of the care you get and keeping the quality of care high. Reforming health care means that if your mother had breast cancer or you had minor surgery last year or your child gets allergies every spring, your insurance company cannot say: I am sorry, you are too much of a risk to cover. It means the premiums you pay every month will not go up just because your insurance company feels like it. It means keeping costs stable so the price of staying healthy does not fluctuate like a gallon of gasoline. It not only means making sure you can keep your family's doctor or keep your health care plan if you like it but also that you can afford to do so. No one can predict when that next accident may occur or when one might lose their job. We do not know when we will get sick next or when one of our loved ones will become ill. But we can take the uncertainty and unfairness out of the current system. We can make sure it is stable, more secure, more reliable, and more dependable.

Second, all of the many plans we have heard for fixing health care have something else in common: They each have maintained President Obama's commitment that this effort, I repeat, will not dig us any deeper into debt than we already have. Any plan that passes this body will be fully paid for, I repeat. When all the numbers are crunched, the No. 1 bottom line is zero. It will not cost anything. In fact, as we improve disease prevention, reduce health disparities, and better coordi-

nate medical services, we will be lowering future costs even further.

Families will also save in the long run because the status quo comes with a hidden health care tax. If you have health care now, you are paying at least \$1,000 more for that health care than you would need to if other families had some insurance. When we reform health care and you are no longer responsible for covering the uninsured, you will see those savings in every paycheck you get.

The only costs that worry me are the costs of doing nothing, of inaction. We have already seen what happens when we do nothing. Over the past 8 years, health care costs rose to record levels and the number of Americans who cannot afford insurance did the same. The number of people who lost their insurance rose dramatically. Every day, 14,000 people in America—7 days a week—lose their health insurance. Right now, in Nevada, half a million people already lack the coverage they need or struggle with inadequate coverage. If we do not act, many, many more Nevadans and millions more Americans will lose their health care as it gets more expensive day by day.

For a generation, we have been working to fix this broken health care system. Throughout this year, we have explored numerous proposals in numerous bipartisan roundtables and committee hearings. This has been the No. 1 issue on our agenda for a long time now. And today we are closer than ever to getting something done.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, let me just add to what I said to open the Senate. Senator DORGAN is an experienced legislator. He is working with one of our outstanding Republican legislators, Senator BENNETT of Utah. They are here and will be, in an hour, ready to start accepting amendments, if there are any. I had one of my Democratic colleagues say: I have a problem with that bill. I said: Get your amendment there today because if you wait until tomorrow, you may not get a chance to offer it.

We need to move forward. These are appropriations bills, and if Democrats and Republicans have not agreed on much here, there has been an absolute commitment to get our appropriations bills done. We are behind schedule even now. We do not want another big omnibus bill. We want to do these appropriations bills, get them done. And we are going to be able to say, when we leave here this work period, we at least got a third of them done before the August break. We are going to come back in September and continue to work through these.

So I repeat, if you have an amendment, you better get it over here today because tomorrow it may not be available to you.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

HEALTH CARE WEEK VIII, DAY II

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, as the debate over health care continues, it is important that we not lose sight of the fact that the American people expect results. No one was ever elected to Congress to push a problem down the road or to point fingers. Americans certainly want reform, and that is exactly what they expect us to deliver. At the same time, Americans have a right to expect that the legislation we pass actually addresses the problems they face and that we do not use the need for reform as an excuse to pass legislation that does not really help or that makes existing problems worse.

This is the nature of the debate we are in: Some in Washington seem to be rushing to push through so-called reforms just for the sake of reform, regardless of whether they actually help the situation, while others are insisting we take the time to get it right.

Fortunately, with each passing day, more and more Americans and now more and more Members of Congress are insisting that we take the responsible path to health care reform—even if it means hitting the reset button and meeting in the middle on reforms that all of us can agree on and that Americans can embrace.

Here are some of the cautionary notes we have heard from Senators just in the last few days.

One top Senator said:

It's better to get a product that's based on quality and thoughtfulness than on trying to just get something through.

Last week, nine freshmen Senators wrote an open letter to the Senate Finance Committee calling for a solution that doesn't bankrupt our health care system. Here is what those nine Senators wrote:

In the face of exploding debt and deficits, however, we are concerned that too little focus has been given to the need for cost containment.

We are hearing the same things over in the House. One Congressman said on Sunday morning that:

The American people want to take a closer look. They want to feel comfortable with it. We have a long way to go.

Another Congressman said he thinks Americans are "shell-shocked" after last year's financial bailout, the stimulus, the cap-and-trade bill, and other major bills approved this year.

Another Congressman, referring to health care reform, asked:

Why are we rushing? Why are we rushing? Let's get it right.

America's Governors are also calling on the administration and Congress to slow down and insisting that Congress take the time to produce the right reform.

One Governor recently was quoted as saying he:

Personally was very concerned about the cost issue, particularly the \$1 trillion figure being batted around.

Here is another one commenting on proposals to shift Medicaid costs on to already cash-strapped States. She said:

As a governor, my concern is that if we try to cost-shift to the States, we are not going to be in a position to pick up the tab.

Another Governor had the same concerns about Medicaid. Here is what he was quoted as saying in the New York Times last week:

Medicaid is a poor vehicle for expanding coverage . . . It's a 45-year-old system originally designed for poor women and their children. It is not health care reform to dump more money into Medicaid.

All these people have something in common: They all want reform. They have concerns about the proposals we have seen so far, and they have something else in common too. Every one of the lawmakers I have quoted is a Democrat—every one of them.

Some are trying to portray this debate as a debate between Republicans and Democrats. This is a distortion of the facts and is a disservice to the millions of Americans who want us to get this reform right. As I and others have said, the only thing that is bipartisan about the reforms we have seen so far is the opposition. The reason is clear: It costs too much; they don't address the long-term challenges in our health care system; they don't reduce long-term costs; they would add hundreds of billions to the national debt; and there is no way the American people will embrace them because all of them fall well outside the boundaries of the middle path Americans are asking us to take.

This is why so many within the President's own party are now standing and telling the administration to slow down and to reassess. This is why even traditionally Democratic groups, such as the AFL-CIO, are having second thoughts. Just last week, the AFL-CIO criticized a plan to tax so-called gold-plated insurance plans because of the impact it could have on workers. Why? Because they know that when politicians talk about raising tax on business, it is average Americans who end up shouldering most of the burden.

Americans don't want to lose the quality of care our current system provides, and they certainly don't want to pay trillions of dollars for a government takeover of health care that could lead to the same denial, delays, and rationing of treatment we have seen in other countries. They have heard the same stories we have—of someone with cancer being denied a drug because it costs too much or the woman who came here from Canada to deliver her babies because there wasn't any room in the neonatal intensive care units back home or they visited places such as the M.D. Anderson Center in Houston, TX, as I have, and saw how dozens of patients from other countries go there for treatments.

We don't know the exact circumstances that brought these people here, but we do know this: that they decided to come to the United States, in some cases traveling thousands of miles to do so, to get the kind of care that only America could provide.

Some people, for some reason, seem afraid to admit it, but the fact is, American health care is the envy—the envy—of many people around the world, and Americans don't want to lose it. That is why Americans are telling us we can reform health care without bankrupting the country or destroying what is so unique and special about our current system. That is why a growing number of politicians in Washington are hearing the people's concerns and speaking out. That is why many of them are now urging the administration to take a different path.

TRIBUTE TO METEOROLOGIST TOM WILLS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of the people of Louisville, my hometown, and across Kentucky who were saddened by the news that after 40 years on the air, WAVE-3 chief meteorologist Tom Wills is retiring. Tom first joined the station and began to be welcomed into people's homes over the airwaves back in 1969.

Many Louisvillians cannot imagine turning on the TV and not being able to find a forecast from Tom Wills. It is a rare and remarkable achievement to reach 40 years in broadcasting and even more so at the same station, serving the same community.

Tom earned the level of respect he has in Louisville by being one of the best meteorologists in the Nation. He is the only broadcast meteorologist in Louisville to hold the Certified Broadcast Meteorologist Seal from the American Meteorological Society, and he is among the earliest holders of the AMS Seal of Approval in the Nation to still be on the air.

We Louisvillians have appreciated waking up every morning the last 40 years knowing Tom is there to tell us whether we need our coat or our umbrella. Tom has also been a calming presence on the television screen at the time of severe weather, helping to save lives by providing crucial information.

Tom was on the air on April 3, 1974, the day when the most severe tornadoes in living memory cut a path of destruction through the city of Louisville. When it was over, lives had been lost, hundreds were injured, and over 900 homes were destroyed.

Throughout the night and into the early morning hours of the next day, Tom Wills was on the air telling people the information they needed to know. As tragic as those events were, we know things could have been worse if not for the lives saved and the tragedy averted thanks to Tom's work.

Tom Wills grew up in West Reading, PA, and knew by age 7 he wanted to do the weather when he grew up. While

earning meteorology degrees at Penn State and Colorado State, he specialized in the science of tornado formation.

In addition to his WAVE-3 duties, he has passed along his knowledge and experience by teaching meteorology at the University of Louisville.

Now that he will no longer have to wake up at 2:30 a.m. every day, I hope Tom will have time to pursue his other interests, including gardening and following our Louisville Cardinals sports teams. Of course, his wife Pam, his kids, and his grandkids will be happy to see more of him. Tom is known throughout the community not just as a fine meteorologist but also a gentleman and friend to the many people he has met in his 40 years on the air. He is going to be greatly missed, and I wish to take this moment to thank him on behalf of Kentuckians everywhere for his service.

We are honored that for four decades he chose to share his talents with the people of Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

REMEMBERING DAVID FULLER

Mr. McCONNELL. Finally, I am saddened by the recent loss of my good friend David Fuller. This was a man who certainly had an impact both on his community and on the Nation as a whole. It is no exaggeration at all to say that thanks to David, thousands of workers at nuclear plants in this country have safer jobs and healthier lives.

That includes David's coworkers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Paducah, KY, where for 10 years David served as president of the Nuclear Workers Union. You see, the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant has produced enriched uranium since 1952 and is currently the only operating uranium enrichment facility in the United States.

For much of the Cold War, the Paducah plant produced fissionable material for our country's nuclear arsenal. It also enriched uranium for commercial nuclear reactors, helping to provide the benefits of cleanly generated electric power to millions of people.

Those Kentuckians who worked in the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant played a vital role in America's victory in the Cold War. Unfortunately, their own government did not look out for them as it should have.

About 10 years ago, we learned there were risks associated with working at the Paducah plant, particularly during the early years of its operation. Some workers were exposed to cancer-causing chemicals and radiological hazards. Some would later sicken and even die.

David was tireless in advocating for the workers at Paducah. He was one of them. He put in 33 years as a cascade operator and electrician. His testimony before Congress was key to advancing the effort to care for those who had been harmed by the government's careless treatment. Thanks, in part, to